Special package to agriculture sector

1790. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to give a special package to agriculture sector in order to boost agricultural production in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the target expected to be achieved in respect of agriculture produce during the current financial year; and

(d) the contingency plan thought of in the event of shortfall in production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) In order to increase the agriculture production in the country, the Tenth Five Year Plan as well as Annual Plans are formulated by the Department which contains a number of programmes & interventions, the major schemes are indicated below:—

— Macro Management of Agriculture consisting of 27 schemes for production of cereals and coarse cereals, sugarcane, jute, watershed development, horticulture and cooperation.

— On Farm Water Management for increasing Crop Production in eastern India.

— Technology Mission on Cotton.

— Technology Mission on Coconut.

— Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States Including Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh & Uttaranchal.

— Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm & Maize (ISOPOM).

Under Risk Management, a number of schemes like National Agriculture Insurance Scheme, Farm Income Insurance Scheme, Minimum Support Price, Market Intervention Scheme as a safety nets

for the farmers are being implemented. More recently, Government has announced a number of initiatives to enhance credit availability to the farm sector.

In the field of marketing & storage and to address the problems of post harvest management, Government is implementing schemes for Construction of Cold Storages, Rural Godowns and Development of Market Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization.

To promote agricultural extension, department is implementing the schemes of Kisan Call Centre, Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension, establishment of Agri-Clinics and Agri- Business by Agriculture Graduates.

Annual Plans formulated by the department are comprehensive and cover all aspects of the agriculture production. In the current Annual Plan 2004-05, and outlay of Rs. 265.00 crores has been provided.

(c) and (d) Agriculture production is highly dependent on weather conditions. There are two main cropping seasons viz. Kharif and Rabi. Different crops are grown in these seasons. Therefore, it is too early to assess the achievement of crop production during the current financial year and the shortfall in production. However, the Government maintains a buffer stock of food grains in order to meet the shortfall in the production.

Phasing out of concession in crop insurance premium

1791. SHRI C. PERUMAL Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether small and marginal farmers are entitled for concession in premium for insurance of their crops;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is proposed to phase out the concession; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, as per the provision of the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) Small and marginal farmers were entitled to subsidy of 50% on the premium in the first year of its implementation.